

How the Marines Are Organized



The United States Marine Corps is organized as a “force-in-readiness,” one that is able to support a wide range of national military requirements. The service is divided into four broad categories:

- Headquarters Marine Corps;
- Operating forces;
- Supporting establishment; and,
- Reserves.

Headquarters Marine Corps

Headquarters, US Marine Corps (HQMC) consists of the Commandant of the Marine Corps and those staff agencies that advise and assist him in discharging

his responsibilities prescribed by law and higher authority. The Commandant is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Navy for the total performance of the Marine Corps. This includes the administration, discipline, internal organization, training, requirements, efficiency, and readiness of the service. The Commandant also is responsible for the operation of the Marine Corps material support system.

Operating Forces

Operating forces—the heart of the Marine Corps—comprise the forward-presence, crisis-response, and fighting power that the Corps makes available to U.S. unified combatant commanders. The Marine Corps has permanently established two combatant command-level service components in support of Unified Commands with significant Marine forces assigned: U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command (MARFORCOM) and Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC). The Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Command (COMMARFORCOM) is assigned to the Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM). He provides the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) to USJFCOM. Likewise, the Commander, U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific (COMMARFORPAC) is assigned to the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM). COMMARFORPAC provides I and III MEFs to USPACOM. These assignments reflect the peacetime disposition of Marine Corps forces. Marine forces are apportioned to the remaining geographic

combatant commands—the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), and U.S. Forces Korea (USFK)—for contingency planning, and are provided to these commands when directed by the Secretary of Defense.

Reserves

The United States Marine Corps Reserve is responsible for providing trained units and qualified individuals to be mobilized for active duty in time of war, national emergency or contingency operations, and provide personnel and operational tempo relief for active component forces in peacetime. Marine Corps force expansion is made possible by activation of the Marine Corps Reserve, which like the active forces, consists of a combined-arms force with balanced ground, aviation, and combat service support units. Organized under the Commander, Marine Forces Reserve (COMMARFORRES), units of this command are located at 185 training centers in 47 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Over the past several years, the Reserve component has been closely integrated with the active component under the Marine Corps' Total Force concept. The Reserves provide individuals and specific units to augment and reinforce active capabilities. The ethos for Marine Forces Reserve is mobilization and combat readiness. This ensures the men and women of Marine Forces Reserve stand ready, willing, and

able to answer the nation's call at home and abroad at a moment's notice.

Supporting Establishment

The Marine Corps supporting establishment consists of those personnel, bases, and activities that support the Marine Corps' operating forces. This infrastructure consists primarily of 15 major bases and stations in the United States and Japan, as well as the personnel, equipment, and facilities required to operate them.

The supporting establishment also includes the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, and Marine Corps Logistics Command, as well as all training activities and formal schools. Additionally, the establishment includes those civilian activities and agencies that support the Marine forces.

Headquarters, US Marine Corps

